

HYPNOTIC SUGGESTION :

AND SOME WAYS IN WHICH IT MIGHT BE USED.

Some years ago I and a friend were going over a cottage known to have attained some distinction in the matter of centuries. In our anxiety to know exactly the sum total of its years, we felt carefully along the walls of the rooms, where vandalism had drawn the veil of flaunting modern papers over the old panels.

After a great deal of feeling about, we were rewarded at last by reaching four little ridges which spelt "1635." We did not see them, it is true, but we felt them, and "feeling" can give quite as much conviction as seeing.

In the same way to-day, most of us have felt at some time or other that there are powers close to us in the air awaiting our discovery to enlist them in the service of mankind. Some of us have felt now and again not far from the kingdom of that discovery. We have almost got our finger on the place: almost deciphered what it spells: almost, by feeling after it insistently, though blindly, found it.

No one can doubt that there is a great future before Hypnotism rightly used: Hypnotic suggestion used definitely, responsibly, and not speculatively. If any proof were needed, the work it has already done in the French hospitals, as well as elsewhere, should justify this belief. In England we have hitherto hung back as regards the matter. And this is largely due to the fear in many minds on account of the risk (which of course does exist in a measure) which would attend its possible use in irresponsible hands. Still, this risk is doubtless capable of being minimised, and one cannot afford to leave unused a great factor for good because it is possible to use it unscrupulously. In fact, when one comes to think of it, even if the exercise of hypnotic suggestion were forbidden professionally, it is impossible to live without *some* hypnotic influence in everyday life.

There are some family hypnotists without whose suggestions tragedies would certainly occur. There are other hypnotists we seem to meet beside the way of life by chance; there are others we meet by design, when, after having been caught and maimed suddenly on the wheel of Life, we go to them for just that living suggestion we feel by instinct they alone can give us. In some form or other hypnotic suggestion is a *sine qua non* of life. We cannot, if we would, away with it.

One form of telepathic suggestion is so common that almost everyone is sensible of it at times. It might be recognised far more than it is—recognised and definitely used as a means of communication, only that so few of us ever think of tabulating impressions, consequently the suggestions become to all intents and purposes of no use at all. I refer to that curious projection of ideas which one person at a distance can often exercise—as it seems, unintentionally, from one subliminal consciousness to another—upon a friend to whom they are writing, or of whom they are definitely thinking, at some given time. It is not an exercise of will, for generally speaking the projector had no intention of forcing his thought on his absent friend: rather it is the resting—if one might so express it—of his personality, for a given period, upon that of his friend!

Many of us must have been aware of the hypnotic influence which sometimes will, after a long silence, induce two friends to write to each other at the same time. Most of us have been aware of that rapping on the door of our consciousness which seems to besiege us sometimes from someone with whom we are in real sympathy. At the moment we are persuaded it is some genuine attempt at communication. Later, we are assured by letter, or by word of mouth, that we were not deceived.

My own conviction for a long time has been, that if only more people would tabulate their impressions in this connection, some useable system of personal telephony could be established. Perhaps such a tabulating would not be impossible amongst some members of a magazine.

This year a very curious impression fell to my lot. The Sunday before Easter Day I was attending a service in one of the Churches of a well-known seaside place. During the whole of the service I was beset—I can use no other word—

by the mental presentiment of the personality of Judas Iscariot. It stayed with me throughout the service—unaccountably, as it seemed to me—and refused to be driven away. The next evening I was in the same Church again, and one of the Cowley Fathers (who was to give addresses during Holy Week), took for the subject of his sermon the character and personality of Judas Iscariot. Then I understood why the thought of him had so forcibly presented itself to me the previous day. It was, presumably, some curious projection of idea on the part of the preacher in connection with the Church.

It would not be too big a saying, I think, to emphasize the fact that the matter of supreme importance in this world is to be able to give, or receive, the right Ideas—the right Suggestions. For by the Idea—right or wrong—the life is guided. On the rock of the Idea the personality itself is built.

On what grounds can auto-suggestion be deprecated? Archdeacon Wilberforce strongly urges its necessity in the same sense in which Professor Nettleship was persuaded of its use and power. "Reckon yourselves dead. Reckon yourselves alive." In other words be convinced of it and you will be it. It is equivalent to saying, "Have the right ideas convincingly, and all will be well with you in this world and the next, and with those whom you influence." It is an undeniable truth that for every human being in the world there is a compelling Idea, which, presented in a certain way, is irresistible—is all powerful. That certain way is hypnotic suggestion, used responsibly and prayerfully.

It goes without saying that it is not everyone to whom this gift of Persuasion is entrusted. "Many the thyrsus bearers, few the mystics." There are many ill-advised people to-day who fill the part of "thyrsus bearers," and who are only too ready with their inane, artificial, and wrongheaded suggestions—suggestions such as those rightly condemned by "X.Y.Z." in her letter. But the "mystics," in whose hands the hypnotism of suggestion has real effect for good, are those who (as Dr. Mornerie said once), "certainly do have senses or powers not owned by (or perhaps undeveloped in) others."

It may not be to-day, or to-morrow, or even the day after, but some shining day as yet unborn in the great world's

future, this power of Suggestion, which undoubtedly exists in our midst, and now and then flashes out in the hands of some man or woman skilled in the use of it, in results which bewilder and amaze the onlooker, will be developed on definite lines, as one of the greatest therapeutic forces in Life.

J. GIBERNE SIEVEKING.

A COMPARISON OF DANTE'S VIEWS ON EDUCATION WITH THAT OF A MODERN SCHOLAR.

All men are born with the desire to know; it is only as a rule their education which quenches that desire. Dante and his age had a definite conception of the means by which the desire should be satisfied, and of that "Goal of life" to which the desire subtended. Love was the universal desire for the ultimate drawing of all things into their appointed place, and so the desire of the soul for knowledge was its desire for God, who is Love, and therefore the wish for knowledge was the only desire capable of satisfaction, for it widened out until it reached God. The means to this end were through self-knowledge, self-reverence, and self-control, for "to be irreverent implies privation," not satisfaction.

The man who truly desires wisdom for its own sake as an expression of God is a "philosopher." The greatest philosophers have led others on the way with authority, for they have been teachers of the way. First, the Stoics preaching self-control; next the Epicurians, teaching self-knowledge, *i.e.*, realization; then the Platonists, teaching self-reverence for the soul, which is the seat of ideas; and lastly the Academicians, who summed up all three in the doctrine of that "Middle Way" which to them, as well as to the devout Buddhist, meant "virtue," which is ultimate harmony with

God. The means by which this knowledge and virtue might be obtained were definite and clear. Where man was free to choose his lot, there alone could the desires have play, and there alone can the right choice be accounted virtue; so the exercise of a right philosophy and the aim of a true education is no utilitarian carving of a way to riches and material prosperities (which never satisfy), but a right employment of leisure; hence men came to speak of a "liberal education"—meaning that which fitted a free man for the use and enjoyment of his liberty.

The actual method, then, ignored all definite training in definite arts and crafts. These were the work of the apprentice and the smith, the guild and the mason, who might honour God by the perfection of their craft, but who were not reckoned as thereby satisfying their desires or educating themselves. The liberal education dealt first with practical road making, then with paths to the supreme.

First in the Trivium men entered in childhood by the strait gate of God's royal road to learning—the universal language of scholars as set forth in Latin called Grammar. Then followed the orderly sorting of thoughts, ideas and impressions through logic, without which men are at the mercy of "every wind of strange doctrine." Next came the art of expression, which is necessary for exchange of opinion.

The Quadrivium then showed the material on which the trained persons were to work.

Music, to understand which meant the only power of certain knowledge for its rules, are subjective and unquestionable—"the mob may reason and question; 'tis we musicians *know*;" and to be in harmony with the universe one must have the ear of Pythagorus. Then followed Astronomy, for we know of other worlds of God than our own; then Geometry, which only makes exact learning or knowledge of our own possible; and lastly Jurisprudence, which "justifies the ways of God to man," and enables man to play a fit part on earth as God's viceroy.

This, then, was the ideal, and such was the scheme for its realization.

How does it compare with ours to-day?

If we compare it with the Education of yesterday (which lingers, alas, far too often into to-day), we shall see instead of a clear ideal a miserable compromise, instead of definite

training for the mind, only teaching of facts (regardless of the fact that these may be fluid and not solid).

But if we compare it with the most enlightened education of to-day, we shall find an enlarged perception of the ideal, and an altogether vaster conception and wider grasp of the means.

"Yesterday" turned a "liberal education" into what Locke called "The education of a gentleman," which narrowed down into the classics, which, thanks to the Reformation, were no longer the literature of a universal language, and mathematics, which were no longer theories of nature and properties, but concrete examples of rote learning.

"The arts" were very largely left severely alone—in England through Puritan influence; abroad from the Jesuitical educational system, which deadened individuality.

Then came the modern spirit of utilitarianism, giving as the goal of education neither the upbringing of gentlemen nor the attainment of the Highest, but the earning of a living; and straightway to the school were added an ardent body of educators who talked about "training faculties" and "modern sides," where science and modern history, geography and languages might be taught. At the same time the social conscience of the world had been aroused uneasily by the upheaval of the French Revolution, and men feared to keep the benefits of education only for those who had money and leisure; hence its introduction to the masses, to whom, in this chaotic state, it has ultimately been freed, with a little technical training in trades very inadequately superadded.

So much for yesterday, but to-day a new philosophy has arisen, whereby at length unity of conception and performance may be attained. Man, we are told, is the sum of his relationships to God, the world, and himself, and education is the science of those relationships. Man is the heir of all the ages, the artificer and also the product of the present, and the projector of the future; and the truest education is that which best projects the efficiency of the future of man's relationships in all three directions.

Therefore men's ideas, acts, habits, environment, and ultimate characters are part and parcel of this education. Man is the centre reaching out in all directions; but as

Dante himself saw, there seems no necessary limit to the circumference.

Man's relations to the world are dynamic and scientific. He learns all the motions possible to his body, all the marvels of creation and natural law on the earth. In the schools there are science and gymnastics writ large. To the world of his fellow-creatures and to himself he reaches forward through psychology, social science, philanthropy, and social intercourse. To God he attains through both these, and the cardinal virtues which remained unchanged through all the ages—faith, hope, and love. The Trivium and Quadrivium—the classical and modern sides must both then be superseded—are indeed in the many centres where this ideal is lovingly and reverently, however inadequately, carried out.

The wide curriculum includes all the ancient liberal arts, and adds to them all their modern sub-divisions plus the training in practical execution of hand and eye, not from reasons of "utility," but as training of the tools of God to be better fitted to use His gifts of material.

Nor does all this imply an undue strain upon the scholar, as Dante has said the desire for knowledge dilates with every fresh satisfaction, and change of occupation (not idleness) is the truest rest and satisfaction; there is no strain and fatigue in doing that which we desire to do.

So the modern schemes return to the old standpoint—man's innate desire for the modern and knowledge of God, increased and enriched by the modern advances in perception of potential social equality, which sees only inequality in men's capacities of acquirement, and so is bound to give all an equal chance of showing what that capacity may be of the revelations of the laws of God in modern science, and of the enlightening trend of modern psychology.

And the ultimate goal remains the same, that "When I awake up after Thy likeness I shall be satisfied."

R. A. P.

BEDFORDSHIRE LACE.

(CONTINUED.)

When one thinks of the days and weeks spent in making one handkerchief border, or two or three yards of lace, it seems wicked that, to gratify the inordinate love of cheapness, the lace is sold at such a small price. Having made lace for the last seven years, I have some experience of the time taken to make it.

A handkerchief border requiring probably 200 to 300 bobbins across the widest part, and taking nearly three weeks' steady work, will be sold for 12s. 6d., ready mounted; or edging, two or three inches wide, which takes a week to do *one* yard, will be sold for ninepence or a shilling per yard! And then people are surprised that the lace-making industry is dying out.

Many of the old lace women work during all the daylight hours of each day, and just earn 7s. 6d. a week if they are doing collars, &c., or 3s. to 5s. a week if doing lace by the yard.

During the last fifty years a great deal of Maltese lace has been made in Bedfordshire, though it has been so much changed that at the present day it is scarcely recognisable as such.

There is a story told by the lace workers that a certain gentleman, of the town of Bedford, travelled to Malta, where he bought much lace as presents for his wife and family.

Arrived at Dover he expected to pay heavy duty on this lace, and was much astonished when it was passed without remark. He asked the Customs' Officer if it was a mistake, but the latter said, "Nothing to pay, sir, it was all made in Bedfordshire." Whether this story is true or not I cannot say, but certainly a great deal of Bedfordshire lace is sent abroad, to Malta and elsewhere.

This lace is sold at such a low price in England that it is really cheaper than imitation lace. One can buy a very